

Message Text

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INFO AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 02637

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, GW

SUBJECT: SAARLAND AND THE POLISH AGREEMENTS

REF: FRANKFURT 1146

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN A CONVERSATION WITH EMBASSY OFFICER FEBRUARY 16, SAARLAND MINISTER PRESIDENT ROEDER REAFFIRMED HIS INTENTION TO HOLD OFF AS LONG AS POSSIBLE MAKING A DECISION ON HOW THE SAARLAND WILL VOTE IN THE BUNDESRAT ON THE POLISH PENSION AGREEMENT. ROEDER FEELS THAT A CDU/CSU VETO IN THE BUNDESRAT WILL HURT THE OPPOSITION PARTIES IN NEXT OCTOBER'S BUNDESTAG ELECTIONS. HE TAKES PAINS TO POINT OUT THAT HOW THE CDU VOTES ON THE PENSION AGREEMENT IS NOT A MATTER OF BASIC PRINCIPLE BUT RATHER A POLITICAL ISSUE PERMITTING HONEST DIFFERENCES OF OPINION, EVEN WITHIN A SINGLE POLITICAL PARTY. AS OF FEBRUARY 17, ROEDER'S INTENTIONS REMAIN UNKNOWN. END SUMMARY.

1. SAARLAND MINISTER PRESIDENT ROEDER, IN A CONVERSATION WITH AN EMBASSY OFFICER FEBRUARY 16, REAFFIRMED HIS INTENTION TO HOLD OFF AS LONG AS POSSIBLE MAKING A DECISION ON HOW THE SAARLAND WILL VOTE IN THE
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BUNDESRAT ON THE POLISH PENSION AGREEMENT. WHEN AN

AIDE TOLD ROEDER THAT HE COULD EXPECT HEAVY PRESSURE TO VETO THE AGREEMENT AT THE FEBRUARY 17TH MEETING OF THE CDU/CSU "LEADERSHIP TEAM" AND MINISTER PRESIDENTS FROM CDU/CSU LAENDER, ROEDER REMARKED THAT HE WOULD NOT BE FORCED INTO TAKING A POSITION AT THAT TIME.

2. DURING THE CONVERSATION, THE SAARLAND MINISTER PRESIDENT CONFIRMED THE IMPRESSION HE GAVE TO CONGEN LEHMANN THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE BUNDESRAT APPROVE THE AGREEMENT. ROEDER POINTED OUT THAT A CDU/CSU LAENDER VETO OF THE PENSION AGREEMENT IN THE BUNDESRAT WOULD HURT THE OPPOSITION PARTIES IN THE OCTOBER BUNDESTAG ELECTIONS. IT IS CLEAR, ROEDER SAID, THAT THE SPD AND FDP WILL ATTEMPT TO PORTRAY THE UNION PARTIES AS BEING UNSYMPATHETIC TO THE PLIGHT OF GERMANS LIVING IN POLAND AND OUT OF STEP WITH THE INTERNATIONAL SPIRIT OF DETENTE.

3. IF THE POLISH AGREEMENT BECAME THE FOCAL POINT OF THE CAMPAIGN, SCHMIDT AND GENSCHER WOULD, ACCORDING TO ROEDER, BE ABLE TO AVOID FACING UP TO THEIR MISHANDLING OF THE ECONOMY AND THEIR MISTAKES IN SOCIAL AND EDUCATION POLICIES.

4. ROEDER SAID THAT HE FELT THAT MINISTER PRESIDENT FILBINGER WANTED A BUNDESRAT VETO OF THE AGREEMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BECAUSE THE ELECTORATE IN BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG WAS BASICALLY CONSERVATIVE AND BECAUSE ANY ANTI-CDU/CSU BACKLASH RESULTING FROM A VETO WAS NOT LIKELY TO OCCUR BEFORE THE APRIL 4 BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG ELECTIONS.

5. COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR THAT ROEDER FINDS HIMSELF UNDER CONFLICTING PRESSURES. ON THE ONE HAND HE NEEDS FDP SUPPORT TO GOVERN IN THE SAARLAND AND IT IS LIKELY THAT EVENTUALLY HE HOPES TO FORM A COALITION WITH THE FDP IN SAARBRUECKEN. A SAARLAND VOTE AGAINST THE AGREEMENT IN THE BUNDESRAT IS LIKELY TO RULE OUT SUCH A CDU/FDP COALITION FOR SOME TIME. AT THE SAME TIME, HE IS UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE FROM HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE

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CDU. HE ATTEMPTS TO RATIONALIZE HIS INDEPENDENT POSITION BY MAKING A DISTINCTION BETWEEN WHAT HE CALLS MATTERS OF PRINCIPLES AND OTHER ISSUES. HOW THE CDU VOTES ON THE PENSION AGREEMENT SHOULD NOT, HE FEELS, BE VIEWED AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE BUT RATHER A POLITICAL ISSUE WHICH PERMITS DIFFERENCES OF OPINION, EVEN WITHIN ONE'S OWN PARTY. AS OF NOW, HOW THE SAARLAND WILL VOTE IN THE BUNDESRAT REMAINS AN OPEN

QUESTION.
HILLENBRAND

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